

THE

KEYNOTER

JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL ITEMS CONSERVATORS



American Political Items Collectors
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APIC CALENDAR – August - November 2010

September 11, 2010 Arizona Political Items Collectors

9 – 1, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Renewal Center, 2310 N. 56th St, Phoenix, Tables for members donation only! Admission is free! Info Jim Puechner (480) 830-5305, Ron Puechner (480) 577-9575 ron.puechner@att.net

September 17-18, 2010 Midwest Regional Indianapolis

Ramada Inn East, E (formerly the Holiday Inn) 6990 East 21 Street, Indianapolis IN. Hotel room reservations (317) 359-5341. Mention the Bandwagon for special \$79.00 convention rate. Table reservations: Bob Coup, PO Box 348, Leola PA 17540 (717-656-7855) E-mail polbandwgn@aol.com. Room hopping Thursday & Friday, Bourse Saturday, 9 am-3 pm.

September 26, 2010 Chicago Area Political Items Collectors Show

Noon - 3 PM Student Cafeteria, Student Resource Center Building, College of DuPage, at Fawell & Lambert Roads, Glen Ellyn IL. Admission free. For info Duane Ross (630) 892-8525.

October 9, 2010 New England Chapter of APIC

9 am - 2 pm (set-up 8 am) V.F.W. Post 1012, 114 Mystic Ave, Medford, MA (Exit 31 off I-92). Admission: \$2.00. Tables: \$25.00 first, \$20 each add'l. E-mail Bob Colt (BOB@BOBCOLT.COM) or phone 781-729-6066. or Barry Mushlin (BARRYBUTTONS@COMCAST.NET);

October 17, 2010 Southern Cal Chapter

Granada Hills, CA 10-2, 10100 Balboa Blvd \$2 students free, table rental \$15 Consigner's cost only 5% of gavel amount, no buyer's premium. For info Bob Banwart (909) 624-5297 or BANWART2@CA.RR.COM

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October 23, 2010 Wisconsin APIC Chapter

Madison Labor Temple, 1602 S. Park St. Madison WI. The show runs Noon - 3 pm. For further details, Pat Kehoe: 414-541-2538 or WIAPIC@YAHOO.COM

November 4-5-6, 2010 Mid-Atlantic Regional

Langhorne, Pennsylvania Sheraton Bucks County Hotel. (A week earlier than last year). Table reservations: Ed Stahl (daytime M-F 908-630-5031, evenings 973-241-5106) or e-mail COLLECTORSTUFF@MSN.COM. All tables are 1st-come, 1st-served basis. Room reservations: 215-547-4100. Mention APIC show for convention room rate. To pre-consign auction items contact Auction Manager Harvey Goldberg (732-382-4652). e-mail HEG1@VERIZON.NET.

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The Newsletter Editor (Harvey Goldberg - hegl1@verizon.net),
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THE AMERICAN POLITICAL ITEMS CONSERVATORS



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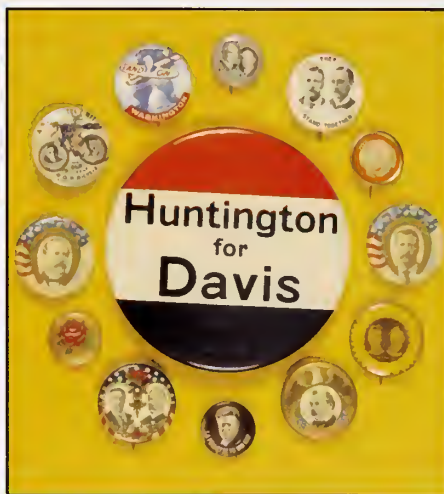
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Bryan Money

Alton B. Parker's White Elephant

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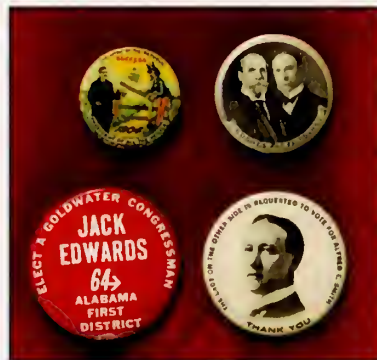


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FROM THE APIC PRESIDENT



Dear fellow APIC members:

This is my last Keynoter message as APIC's President. Chris Hearn is taking over the helm. Chris served as President before me, but the unprovoked attacks of 9/11 called him to immediate duty. Understandably, Chris's attention was suddenly focused on the safety and security of our country, and he was not able to accomplish the goals he set for APIC during his initial tenure. I'm thankful that he was kept safe from harm and I'm grateful that we now have the benefit of his continued leadership. Chris has my full support, and I ask that you give him yours as well.

It's hard to believe that seven years have passed since you elected me APIC's President.

I have never forgotten the trust and confidence you placed in me, and have done my best to make APIC our nation's flagship hobby organization. But I can only take part of the credit for APIC's restructuring and advancements these past seven years. No one works alone, and I owe Harvey Goldberg, Ed Stahl, Robert Fratkin, Michael Kelly, Al Salter, Lon Ellis, Mark Evans, Germaine Broussard, Bren Price and Bob and Jeannine Coup a tremendous thank-you for their unselfish devotion of time and energy. Whether you call them a "kitchen cabinet" or a "Band of Brothers," they could always be counted on for sound advice and candid, constructive thoughts. Together, we've worked to ensure that APIC survives the national recession and I'm proud of our results.

I've often thought about the APIC I'd want my four year old son, Max, to be active in one day. I've questioned whether today's policies and precedents will benefit Max and others in his age group when it's their turn to write for the Keynoter, attend bourses or enjoy other various APIC activities. I've always made certain that the answer is yes. I am confident that the APIC of today will benefit my son, and your sons, daughters and grandchildren when its their time to take an active role. The efforts we've made over the past seven years ensure that they will have an APIC to inherit and continue in the proud and enthusiastic tradition of their parents and grandparents.

From my heart, I thank you for the true honor of serving as APIC's President these past seven years. I'll never forget your kindness, support, inspiration and friendship. Many years from now, when I reflect upon my service to our hobby, I won't remember the board meetings or monthly columns. Rather, I'll remember YOU, the good, caring people who allowed me this great privilege.

Yours in progress,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Krapf", written in a cursive style.

Brian E. Krapf

As Brian Krapf finishes his term as President of the APIC, we wanted to take a moment to thank him for his continuing support of and high expectations for *The Keynoter*. It was Brian who had the vision to believe in the feasibility of a full color magazine. It could not have been done and we would not be in color today if it weren't for him.

- Michael Kelly & Robert Fratkin

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Calvin Coolidge and Bryan Money seem appropriate topics as our nation struggles out of one of its periodic banking crises. The image of Calvin Coolidge is of the personification of the *laissez-faire* view of government and he was famed for the comment "The business of America is business."



As is so often the case, however, that widely-quoted saying isn't really what Coolidge said. The actual quote came from a speech to the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington, D.C. on January 17, 1925. The quote actually reads: "After all, the chief business of the American people is business." However, Coolidge didn't stop there, going on to say that, "Of course the accumulation of wealth cannot be justified as the chief end of existence." In another perspective that has a very modern resonance, he went on to say that that the business interests of newspaper owners should not taint their reporting.

Likewise, William Jennings Bryan's attacks on the banks and moneyed interests also have a modern ring to them, especially his comment that "'No one can earn a million dollars honestly.'" Of course, in 2010, we'd have to change that to a billion dollars. Inflation, you know. In fact, Senator Ev Dirksen's widely quoted jibe about the federal budget ("A million here and a million there; after awhile you're talking real money") would probably require using the term "trillion" these days.

Michael Kelly
Editor

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Its Game - Its Finish
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NEXT ISSUE-- Recipients of the nation's highest award – the Congressional Medal of Honor – have often found their way into politics, from Teddy Roosevelt to Bob Kerrey. A later issue in the year will focus on Winfield Hancock. If you have any unusual items relating to this subject that you'd like to share with fellow collectors, please send 300 dpi scans to *The Keynoter* at michael.kelly@mcc.edu.

FRONT COVER-- This 6" jugate button is one of the finest display pieces from Calvin Coolidge's 1924 presidential campaign.

CONTRIBUTIONS-- The editor wishes to thanks the following for providing illustrations for this issue: Al Anderson, Steve Baxley, Germaine Broussard, Robert Fratkin, Tom French, David and Janice Frent, Harvey Goldberg, Heritage Auctions, Bill Jones, H. Joseph Levine, Gary W. Potter, Laura Romeyn, and Norman Loewenstern

SUBMISSIONS-- *This is your publication. Please feel free to share your ideas, suggestions, illustrations and stories. The Keynoter is delighted to share pictures of interesting political Americana with its readers. When submitting an illustration, send it as an .eps, .jpg or .pdf file to mkelly@mcc.edu. Illustrations should be in color and submitted in digital format with at least 300 dpi resolution (preferably higher). Files must be created at 100% of actual size or larger (smaller risks losing clarity). Digital electronic images should be saved to a minimum of 300 dpi as TIF, GIF, JPEG or EPS files, preferably in Adobe Photoshop.*

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Another all-star issue! Even though I did furnish about a quarter of the IWW items, your team of Bob Fratkin, Germaine Broussard and Ed Sullivan did an excellent job. I can't imagine an issue on this subject in 1962. Keep up the good work.

Ted Watts (APIC #146)

My family has lived in Montana since 1863, so the Spring issue of The Keynoter was of particular interest to me. For APIC members who have an interest in further reading about Montana politics and the activities of the IWW, I would recommend the book Copper Camp, written in 1943 as part of the WPA Writers Project. It was published again several years ago amid an uproar of political correctness controversy. It is well worth the read.

Richard L. Thoroughman (APIC #12255)

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Keep Cool with Coolidge

By Michael Kelly

**"I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy, A Yankee Doodle do or die!
A real live nephew of my Uncle Sam, Born on the Fourth of July!"**
-Popular song



Born on July 4th, 1872 in Plymouth Notch, Vermont where his family had resided since 1791, John Calvin Coolidge came to personify the austere Yankee integrity of New England during an era when Americans indulged in reckless spending, loose morals and unprecedented frivolity. Historians have since denigrated his presidency – often because of their own political and cultural agendas, given the subsequent Depression and New Deal – but Calvin Coolidge was wildly popular while in office and remains a well known cultural icon to this day.

Best known today as the author of a score of sharp and concise witticisms, he was a more complex and productive man than is usually thought. One thing is clear; he was a brilliant politician. He won a dizzying succession of public offices during an era when terms for most state offices were only one year, moving from state senator to Vice President of the United States in a single decade.

Only one year after he graduated cum laude from Amherst College in 1895, the 24-year-old Coolidge was elected as an alternate delegate to the Republican state convention. The very next year he was admitted to the Massachusetts bar and made a member of the Republican city committee in Northampton. The following year, he was a delegate to the state convention and elected to the city council. Two years later he was elected city attorney, re-elected the following year and defeated the year thereafter. By 1906 he had married, had a son and been elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Despite his later reputation as a cautious, slow moving president, Calvin Coolidge was clearly a young man in a hurry when it came to politics. Following two terms in the state House, he was elected mayor of Northampton in 1909. He would not be out of public office again until he left the White House in 1929. After being re-elected to a second term as mayor, Coolidge was then elected to the state senate. After three terms in the state senate, Coolidge was elected Lieutenant Governor in a landslide. Serving under Gov. Samuel W. McCall during an era when Massachusetts politics was awash with significant political personalities, Coolidge made a reputation for himself for the brevity and wit of his speech.

When a long-winded legislator delivered a lengthy tedious speech in support of a piece of legislation, the windbag utilized a series of oratorical repetitions, each of which began with "Mr. Speaker, it is. . ." When he finally finished, Coolidge stood to speak. When recognized, he simply said, "Mr. Speaker, it is. . .not" and sat down. The legislature laughed and voted with Coolidge to defeat the bill.

Coolidge was re-elected as Lieutenant Governor in 1916 and again in 1917. As a sign of how crowded the political field was in Massachusetts during that time, the state fielded no fewer than three presidential hopefuls in 1916 on the Republican side alone, including Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Governor Samuel McCall and Secretary of War John Weeks. A handsome multigate button exists from the April 25, 1916, Massachusetts presidential primary urging the election of a slate of unpledged electors. The button pictures Lodge, McCall and Weeks plus party leader Winthrop Murray Crane.

Calvin Coolidge was biding his time during this competition, awaiting his opportunity. One widely quoted story from this era tells of Coolidge presiding over the state senate when two senators lost their tempers during an angry debate. One senator told the other to "go to hell". The insulted senator appealed to Coolidge to do something about the insult. Cal allowed a moment of silence before drawing his reply. "I've looked up the law, Senator," Coolidge said, "and you don't have to go there."

In 1918, Coolidge easily won election as governor. The following year proved to be the year that made Coolidge a national figure. The year of 1919 started calmly enough with the recently inaugurated governor welcoming President Woodrow Wilson to Boston as Wilson returned from the Paris Peace Conference. But in the aftermath of World War I, long suppressed labor grievances were breaking out across the nation stimulating the "Red Scare" reaction.

In July, Boston's police commissioner issued an order forbidding police officers to establish a union. In August, the Boston Police Union was defiantly chartered. In September, the police commissioner suspended 19 officers who were union leaders. The police voted 1134 to 2 to go on strike and walked off the job. With police on strike, disorder and looting broke out in Boston. Although slow to act at first, Coolidge sent in the National Guard at the mayor's request and order was restored.



With the eyes of a frightened nation on Boston, Coolidge made a public statement that "There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody anywhere, any time." The public applauded

Coolidge as a symbol of order in a time of disruption and concern. Nine days after his statement he was re-nominated governor in the Republican primary and went on to an easy re-election in November. That autumn the first references to him as a potential presidential candidate began to appear in the nation press.

The 1920 Republican National convention was one of the most famous in party history. The complex tale of a deadlock between Illinois Governor Frank Lowden, General Leonard Wood and California Senator Hiram Johnson that led to the original "smoke filled room" and the nomination of an obscure senator named Warren Harding is too rich a tale to tell here. Let it suffice to say that the delegates were tired, dissatisfied and resentful of their leaders when it came time to pick a vice presidential candidate.

As the final ballot for the presidential nomination was still under way, the cabal of U.S. senators that had pushed the presidential nomination to Harding realized that they had yet to pick a running mate. Without even

consulting with their presidential candidate, six senators gathered in a dimly lit space beneath the speaker's platform to make the decision. The small group decided to give the second slot to yet another senator, Irvine Lenroot of Wisconsin.

Lenroot was a progressive who would add balance to the ticket. Lenroot himself had no idea what was happening and when informed of their decision, hesitated to agree.

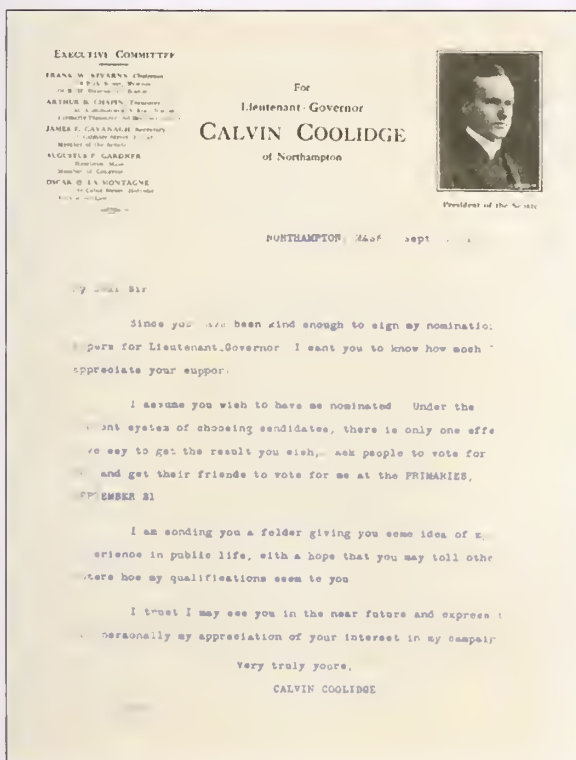


FOR LIEUT. GOVERNOR



CALVIN COOLIDGE

President of Senate 1914 1915.
Mayor of Northampton 1910 1911.
Member of General Court 1907, 1908,
1912, 1913, 1914, 1915.
Member Northampton City Council, City
Solicitor, Vice President Nonatuck
Savings Bank.



The senators didn't wait for their colleague's consent and sent Illinois Senator Medill McCormick to the podium to place Lenroot's name in nomination for vice president. As he walked by the press table, McCormick shouted to a friendly reporter, "We're going to put Lenroot in with Harding." The surprised journalist shouted back, "The hell you are."

As McCormick began his speech delegates on the floor began to stir angrily. They had come to the convention to fight passionately for Lowden, Wood or Johnson and had been forced to swallow Harding against their will. Now they were being asked to take another senator for vice president without so much as being asked their opinion. In making the speech for Lenroot, McCormick used a common rhetorical technique. He described a series of admirable virtues without revealing the name of the candidate until the end. The technique backfired. Every time he would state a quality needed in the candidate, delegates would call out "Coolidge!"

An electric sense of rebellion swept the hall. As speakers stepped forward to second Lenroot's nomination, chants for Coolidge began to break out. When delegate Wallace McCamant of Oregon took the podium to make another seconding speech for Lenroot, he surprised party leaders by launching into a speech nominating Coolidge.

The hall exploded in applause and delegates rushed forward to second the nomination for Coolidge. Within moments the convention leadership knew they had lost control and bowed to the inevitable. When the votes were counted Coolidge won the nomination with 674 1/2 votes to Lenroot's 164 1/2 and around a hundred or so for others. The delegates were delirious with their successful rebellion.

Eighty-six year old Chauncey DePew told Coolidge, "I have been present at every Republican Convention beginning with 1856 and I have never seen such a spontaneous and enthusiastic tribute as the vote for Vice President."

Back in Boston, the telephone rang in the modest two room apartment where Calvin and Grace Coolidge lived with their sons (Calvin, Jr. and John). Calvin answered the phone, listened and hung up. He turned to his wife and said, "I have been nominated for Vice President."

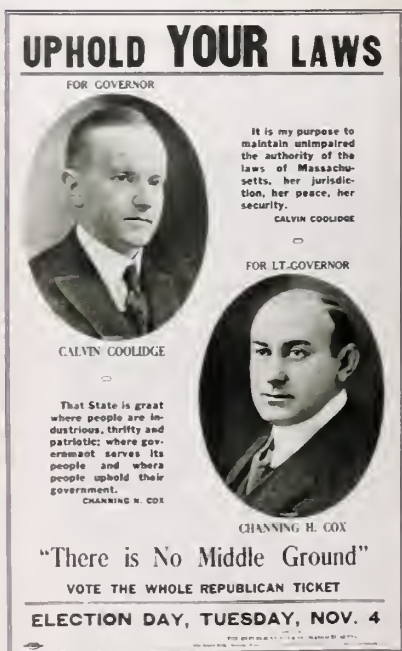
"You are not going to accept, are you?" she asked.

Without changing expression, he replied, "I suppose I shall have to."

The Fall campaign pitted Harding and Coolidge against James Cox and Franklin Roosevelt. Harding barely campaigned at all, staying in his hometown of Marion, Ohio, and greeting visiting delegations from around the country. Cox, by contrast, travelled 22,000 miles and spoke before 2 million people. It did him little good, as the Harding-Coolidge ticket swamped Cox-Roosevelt in a record breaking landslide.

As Vice President, Calvin Coolidge brought a calm, down-to-earth quality that pleased a public worn out from the dramatic Progressive Era followed by a world war. The new Vice President was soon the topic of scores of funny stories that emphasized his modesty, dry humor and brevity of speech. Shortly after his inauguration, he received a dinner invitation from a man unknown to him. When he asked his secretary to find out who the man was, she replied that his name wasn't even listed in the Social Register.

"No conclusion can be drawn from that," the new Vice President replied, "I've been in it myself only half an hour."



KEEP COOL-IDGE

KEEP COOL-IDGE



Grace Coolidge was a popular figure while First Lady.

Grace Coolidge told of the dinner party when the Vice President found himself seated next to a society matron who gushed, "You must talk to me, Mr. Coolidge. I made a bet today that I could get more than two words out of you."

"You lose," he said and turned away.

When his successor as governor of Massachusetts, Channing Cox, paid him a courtesy call in Washington, the new governor asked how Coolidge had been able to see so many visitors each day and still manage to leave the governor's office by

5 p.m. Cox confessed that he often found himself at work until 9 p.m. due to the press of visitors. "Why the difference?" he asked Coolidge.

"You talk back," he answered.

He later advised Herbert Hoover how to get rid of long winded visitors: "If you keep dead still they will run down in three or four minutes."

Perhaps the most famous Coolidge story wasn't true although his wife said it was such a good story that "it is almost a pity to refute it." According to the story, Grace wasn't able to accompany Calvin to Church one Sunday. When he returned, she asked whether he had enjoyed the sermon, "Yes," he said. "What was it about?" she asked. "Sin," he replied. "But what did the pastor say?" Grace insisted. "He was against it," replied Coolidge.

A true story tells of how Coolidge was invited to cable a greeting to a meeting of his fellow Amherst alumni. Hoping for a long message, the sponsors of the meeting told Coolidge that the telegram should be sent collect. At the climax of the meeting, Coolidge's name was announced to tumultuous applause and then the message was read; "Greetings. Calvin Coolidge."

It was just such stories that led one campaign button manufacturer to use the slogan "Deeds Not Words".



Many consider Grace Coolidge President Coolidge's strongest asset. Her humor, chic appearance and warmth won all hearts, and she had few critics. The death of her oldest child while in the White House was seen as a national tragedy.



Grace Coolidge bookend (shown reduced).



Sheet music from 1924.

Against the backdrop of a frantic social scene, quiet Calvin Coolidge provided a reassuring sense that America was still that small town society of the past. He gave the country a feeling of security and was known for his long daytime naps, often awaking with a smile to ask his secretary, "Is the country still there?" When Coolidge attended a performance of a play featuring the Marx Brothers, Groucho Marx spied him in the audience and said, "Isn't it past your bedtime, Calvin?"

H. L. Mencken said, "A remarkable man, a really remarkable man. Nero fiddled while Rome burned but Coolidge only snores."

But such characterizations do not do justice to the man. One example of how the reality of Calvin Coolidge conflicts with his popular image is the realm of race relations. In an era when vicious racism was the norm, Negro voting rights in the South almost nonexistent, lynching commonplace and the Ku Klux Klan a large and powerful national organization, Calvin Coolidge was an outspoken advocate for Negro Americans. Although by today's standards his remarks may seem tame, by the standards of his time he spoke with boldness. He raised the image of the Negro as a military figure, articulated injustice in terms his audience would accept, repeatedly decried racist violence and called for full equality.

When accepting the 1920 vice presidential nomination, he stated, "There is especially due to the Colored race a more general recognition of their constitutional rights. Tempted with disloyalty, they remained loyal, serving in the military with distinction, obedient to the draft to the extent of hundreds of thousands, investing one dollar out of every five they possessed in Liberty bonds. Surely they hold the double title of citizenship, by birth and by conquest, to be relieved from all imposition, to be defended from lynching and to be freely granted equal opportunities."

While President, Coolidge was asked to intervene when New York Republicans were preparing to nominate a Black congressional candidate. In response to a letter asking him to prevent the nomination, he wrote, "I am amazed to receive such a letter." He went on to write about Black soldiers in the recent war and pointed out that a half million Black Americans were called up in the draft "not one of whom sought to evade it. . . The suggestion of denying any measure of their full political rights to such a great group of our population as the Colored people is one which, however it might be received in some other quarters, could not possibly be permitted by one who feels a responsibility for living up to the traditions and maintaining the principles of the Republican Party."



The Vice President was a popular part of the Harding administration and remained untouched by growing scandals that soon emerged. When a harried President Harding collapsed and died while on a Western tour, Coolidge was vacationing at his father's home in Plymouth, Vermont. Word arrived shortly after midnight on August 3, 1923. "Guess we'd better have a drink," was Coolidge's response. So he walked to the town's general store, had a soft drink (Moxie) and phoned the Attorney General in Washington to see what he should do. He confirmed that his father, as a notary public, was authorized to swear his son in as President and then walked back to his father's house. There, by the light of a kerosene lamp, Calvin Coolidge took his oath of office as President of the United States.

With Harding's death and news of political scandals breaking out, Americans took solace in the quiet integrity of their new president. Stories of his frugality and simplicity of speech became a national pastime. Admirers boasted that "he could be silent in five languages" while detractors sneered "he looks as if he'd been weaned on a pickle." But the political reality was that the nation was experiencing a wave of unprecedented prosperity and Americans always approve of the president when times are good, and times were very good in the mid Twenties. Although Prohibition made alcohol illegal, it appeared that drinking actually went up. The stock market certainly went up and kept going up while women's skirts and hair grew shorter. Hot jazz and new dance crazes swept the country as the "Roaring Twenties" burst out in full swing.

It was an issue he often revisited in his public statements. His first annual Message to Congress in 1923 includes the passage: "The Congress ought to exercise all its powers of prevention and punishment against the hideous crime of lynching, of which the Negroes are by no means the sole sufferers, but for which they furnish a majority of the victims" and recommended a half million dollar authorization (a huge sum in 1923) to Howard University medical school to train Black doctors.

His 1924 Annual Message to Congress again discussed the Black community and stated, "I firmly believe that it is better for all concerned that they should be cheerfully accorded their full constitutional rights, that they should be protected from all those impositions to which, from their position, they naturally fall a prey, especially from the crime of lynching, and that they should receive every encouragement to become full partakers in all the blessings of our common American citizenship." Again in his 1925 Annual Message to Congress; "The progress which they have made in all the arts of civilization in the last 60 years is almost beyond belief. Our country has no more loyal citizens." At the 1924 Republican National Convention, Coolidge intervened to seat delegates from the Southern "Black and Tan" party factions challenged by rival "Lily White" factions.

Coolidge skillfully outmaneuvered potential rivals for the 1924 nomination, formally announcing his intention to run for his own term in late 1923. Although Hiram

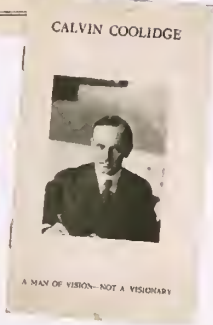
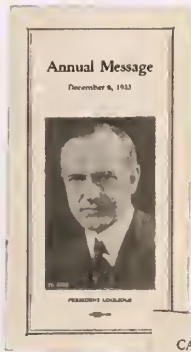
Johnson and others tried to challenge Coolidge for the 1924 nomination, he won on the first ballot with all but 44 delegate votes. Given his experience, the President left the choice of a running mate to the convention. "It did it in 1920," he commented, "and it picked a darned good man."

The delegates didn't handle their power that well. Despite his insistence that he didn't want the nomination, they picked Illinois' Frank

Lowden for vice president on the second ballot. The proud Lowden considered the nomination beneath him and refused the nomination, thereby effectively ending his political career. A very rare and handsome jugate button exists for the Coolidge-Lowden ticket (although it misspells his name as "Louden").

Illinois didn't lose the spot, however, as the delegates then picked Charles G. Dawes to fill out the ticket.

Dawes was a Chicago banker who had served as the first Director of the Budget in the Harding administration. It says much about the public's attitude toward business in the days before the Great Depression that a political party would put a banker on its ticket.



What minor problems were evident at the GOP gathering were nothing compared to the disaster when the Democrats gathered in New York's Madison Square Garden for their convention. The East battled the West, the Wets battled the Drys, the Catholics battled the Klan and Al Smith battled William Gibbs McAdoo for 103 ballots until the delegates collapsed in exhaustion. The Democrats finally coughed up a ticket of John W. Davis and Charles W. Bryan (brother of William Jennings Bryan) and staggered home. To make matters worse, Wisconsin's fiery Senator Robert LaFollette had entered the field with running mate Senator Burton Wheeler of Montana under the banner of the Progressive Party. With the opposition vote divided and the economy booming, Calvin Coolidge was heavily favored for re-election.

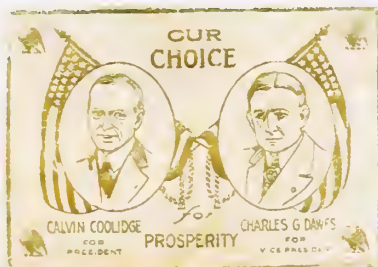
Prospects of a national campaign didn't change Coolidge's speaking style. When reporters requested a press conference with the President, the first question was "Do you have any statement on the campaign?" "No," came the reply. "Can you tell us something about the world situation," asked another reporter. "No," responded Coolidge. "Any information about Prohibition?" asked a third. "No," said the President. As the disappointed reporters filed out of the room, Coolidge called to them: "Now, remember – don't quote me."



1-3/4" Jugate
shown reduced



and
**The Whole
Republican
Ticket
Nov. 4th
1924**

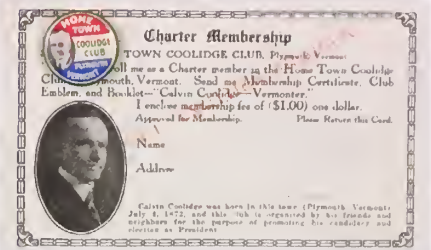


1-1/4" Jugate
shown reduced

One set of items unique to the Coolidge campaign is from the Home Town Coolidge Club of Plymouth, Vermont. As America's population left farms and small towns to pour into the cities, they began to hold up the way of life left behind as a symbol of simpler, better days. Coolidge was seen as a living example of these small town virtues and Republicans around the country mailed their \$10 contributions to Plymouth, Vermont to become charter members of the Home Town Coolidge Club. In return they received a receipt, button, membership card and copy of the Official Campaign Song of the Home Town Coolidge Club:



*"In a quaint New England farmhouse
on an early summer's day,
a farmer's boy became our Chief
in a homely, simple way.
With neither pomp nor pageantry
he firmly met the task,
to keep him on that job of his
is all the people ask. So 'keep cool and keep Coolidge'
for the good old USA. . ."*



This snappy melody was available both on a card and on a fan that could be rolled to serve double duty as a megaphone for cheering the Grand Old Party.

Plymouth Notch was the starting point for another special campaign event, an automobile caravan that crossed the country to San Francisco via the Lincoln Highway, boosting the Coolidge-Dawes ticket on the way. Dubbed the Lincoln Tour, the caravan was led by a special truck (an REO Speed Wagon) on which was painted portraits of the candidates and huge pictures of the small cottage in Plymouth where the President had been born. The truck bore such slogans as "Common Sense and Brass Tacks" and carried speakers and material from town to town. Political figures would join their cars to the caravan for several stops and then be replaced by a new assortment of local luminaries. The arrival of this caravan in a town served as a perfect excuse to rally the faithful and would often be celebrated with festivities featuring some good old Republican speech making.



Keeping cool with Coolidge

Fans shown reduced size



Democrats warned of the dangers facing the Republic with a slogan; "A Vote for Coolidge is a Vote for Chaos." The GOP replied with a classic: "Keep Cool with Coolidge."

In 1924, "cool" did not mean hip. It meant the opposite: steady, dependable and calm. Like all great slogans, it was a perfect reflection of the candidate and was found on a raft of items. While fans were particularly popular as they made "keeping cool" all the easier, buttons, sheet music and other campaign items carried the message throughout the nation.

Some items looked back to the days of McKinley's Full Dinner Pail and Teddy Roosevelt's Square Deal; "Keep Square Deal Coolidge" suggests one photo pin while another button pictures the "The Little Red School House" with the legend "On the Square." Most items, however, modestly asked voters to just "Keep Coolidge."

The modest claims on behalf of the candidate were reflected in other buttons as well. "Let Well Enough Alone" advises one picture pin although others promoted "Courage-Duty-Confidence" or "Courage-Confidence-Coolidge". One hyperactive button actually rouses itself to the level of "Let's Go with Coolidge" but more typical were "Coolidge of Course" and "Safe with Cal". "Silent-Safe-Sure" boasts another button while a second dubs the candidates "Sane and Safe."

Sanity was, apparently, well regarded that year as the November election gave the Coolidge-Dawes ticket a landslide over its opponents. The Republicans took 54% of the vote versus 29% for the Democrats

and 17% for LaFollette, a huge majority despite the three way race.

His inaugural address on March 4, 1925, was the first inaugural address ever broadcast over radio to a listening nation. Coolidge remained very popular throughout his term and tragedies such as the death of his father and the death of his son, Calvin, Jr., only endeared him to further the public.

Throughout his years in office he remained the same cautious, quiet personality.



Returning from a speech in Omaha, his train stopped for fuel in a small Missouri town to find that a crowd of over two thousand people had gathered in hopes of seeing the President. An aide woke the dozing Coolidge and asked if he would say a word to the crowd. The President rose, smoothed his hair, straightened his jacket and walked out to the platform at the rear of the train. The crowd cheered when they saw him and cheered again when Mrs. Coolidge appeared. The local master of ceremonies shushed the crowd. "Now you folks keep quiet," he said importantly, "I want absolute silence. The President is going to address us." The crowd quickly hushed. "All right," the self-important local politician said, turning to the President, "Mr. President, you may speak now."

At that moment there was a hiss of air as the brakes were released and the train began to roll out of town. With a smile, the President raised his hand to the crowd and said, "Goodbye."

He didn't need many more words than that to announce his decision to step down as President despite all indications that he could have been easily re-elected to yet another term. With no advance warning, he walked up to a group of reporters and handed them a handwritten note that read "I do not choose to run for President in nineteen twenty eight."

He got out while the getting was good. Less than eight months after he left office came the October 1929 stock market crash and the onset of the Great Depression. During those days of panic, many voters remembered the prosperity of the Coolidge era and wished that he were still president. As the 1932 election approached, actor Otis Skinner told Coolidge, "I wish it were you that we were going to vote for in November. It would be the end of this horrible depression."

Coolidge replied, "It would be the beginning of mine."

As the nation reeled from economic chaos, Calvin Coolidge died on January 5, 1933, less than two months before Franklin Roosevelt would take office. He was mourned by the public of that time as a beloved figure and remains to this day one of the most unique political personalities ever to occupy the White House.



"Prosperity is only an instrument to be used, not a deity to be worshiped."

- President Calvin Coolidge

An Introduction to Bryan Money

By Bill Jones

On July 9, 1896 a 36 year old, relatively obscure former Nebraska congressman took the stage to give a speech at the Democratic National Convention. His assignment was to lend support to the free silver plank in the party platform, but his goal was to win his party's presidential nomination. After extolling the virtues of life in rural America and proclaiming that the free silver movement could no longer be ignored, he closed with his most famous line:

"You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns; you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold!"

Then he held out his arms and laid his head to one side in a symbolic recreation of The Crucifixion. There was a moment of silence, followed by a tumultuous demonstration that lasted for more than an hour. The following day, dark horse candidate William Jennings Bryan won the Democratic presidential nomination.

Bryan's 1896 presidential campaign was based almost entirely upon one issue, the unlimited coinage of silver at an inflated value relative to gold. Under Bryan's proposal silver would be monetized and coined using the standard that 16 parts of silver were equal in value to one part of gold. The problem was that the price ratio between the metals was considerably higher than that. There was also so much silver available that there would be almost no control over the amount of new currency that could be added to the money supply.

Bryan's opponents believed that his proposal would result in massive inflation and the ultimate breakdown of the U.S. monetary system. At a time when the industrialized nations were on the gold standard, the U.S. would be left with an inflated currency and virtually no U.S. gold coins in domestic circulation. This would considerably hinder the nation's efforts to become a world economic power. In addition lenders were concerned that their loans would be repaid in inflated dollars. This concept appealed to debt strapped farmers who formed the core of Bryan's support.

The unexpected rise of William Jennings Bryan energized his Republican opposition. In prior presidential elections "soft money" and later "free silver" had been peripheral issues. The Greenback and then the Populist Party had pushed for significant increases in the money supply since the mid 1870s. Some congressmen and senators, mostly from the western silver mining states, had proposed the idea in Congress. But the Greenbacks and the Populists had been third parties that had posed no threat of winning the presidency. Congressional moves toward the free coinage of silver had ended in compromise legislation. Now a young, dynamic speaker with a rousing voice and a charismatic speaking style had won the nomination of the Democratic Party. The establishment felt threatened and it had to respond.

Prior to Bryan's nomination the Republican Party had nominated William McKinley for President. McKinley had supported bimetallism in the past, but now he was firmly committed to the gold standard. McKinley's greatest political weapon was his campaign manager, Mark Hanna. Hanna postponed a planned post convention vacation, dipped into his own financial reserves and began a very successful fund-raising campaign from wealthy contributors. It has been estimated that the McKinley campaign had at least \$7 million at its disposal for the 1896 presidential campaign. In contrast the Democrats had no more than \$300 thousand, which came mostly from silver mine owners.

The Republicans used their huge war chest wisely. William McKinley chose not to compete with the flamboyant Bryan on the campaign trail but conducted a front porch campaign from his home in Canton, Ohio. An estimated 750,000 pilgrims came to hear the future president speak. As Bryan traveled around the country, sometimes giving more than 20 speeches day, Republican speakers followed him to rebut his free silver message.

It has been estimated that the Republicans and their supporters issued 120 million political pieces during the 1896 campaign. These items included flyers, leaflets, ribbons, mechanical gadgets, celluloid buttons and a series medals and medalets that are now called Bryan money. Tokens and medalets had been fixtures in presidential campaigns since Andrew Jackson's supporters had issued them in 1824, but the output in 1896 was unprecedented.



Collectors divide Bryan money into two broad categories. The satirical pieces are made of base metals that include aluminum, lead, pot metal and iron. The designs were quite often grotesque reproductions of the liberty head and eagle that appeared on the government issued Morgan silver dollars. The comparative pieces were made of coin silver (90% silver, 10 copper). These pieces purported to show what the size and weight of a silver dollar would be if it contained a dollar's worth of silver relative to gold.

A Sampling of Satirical Bryan Money

Fred Schornstein in his excellent book, *Bryan Money*, lists more than 200 varieties of satirical Bryan money. By the far the most popular denomination is the "dollar" although there are "dimes," "quarters" and a few five cent pieces. The quality of workmanship ranged from excellent to circular blobs of base metal with barely discernable features. The reason for this disparity is that the makers of these pieces ranged from jewelers and artists to blacksmiths and unskilled citizens who wanted to make a political statement. Emotions ran high during the 1896 campaign, and these pieces reflected that.



This is an example of a well executed satirical Bryan Dollar. The piece is cast in lead, is 89 mm in diameter and 3 mm thick, and weighs six ounces. The composition, size and weight ridicule "Bryan's money." The slogan on the reverse can be read as, "Bryan's idea of coinage, 16 to 1 aber (but) NIT (Not In Trust)." [25mm=1"]



This piece is unusual because Ms. Liberty is facing right, which is the opposite of how she is depicted on the Morgan silver dollar. It is made of nickel-plated cast iron, has a diameter of 79 mm, a thickness of 6 mm and weighs almost half a pound. There are two anti-Bryan slogans that often appeared during the campaign: "In God we trust; in Bryan we burst," and "In God we trust for the other 47 cents." This last slogan pointed out the fact that a silver dollar contained 53 cents worth of silver. The execution, which is crude and cartoon-like, was probably intentional.



The lettering on this Bryan dime is well executed except that the letter "N" is backwards in all cases. The backward "N" is often seen on Bryan money and was usually intentional. The implication was that Bryan and his supporters were ignorant and uneducated.

The term "UNLIMITED" is important. One of the great concerns that Bryan's detractors had was that the free coinage of silver would be unlimited and massive inflation would be the result. The piece is holed for suspension, but since it weighs almost two ounces, it would have been a very cumbersome lapel piece.



This Bryan dime is unusual because it one of the few pieces that mentions William McKinley: "Vote for a 100 cent dollar and McKinley." It is cast in lead and has a diameter of 50 mm. The lettering is crude, and it was probably a reflection of the abilities of the maker. The piece pictured in Schornstein's book (variety # 317) is identical to this piece except that it shows the word "VOTE" as "VOT." Perhaps the maker corrected this error and then continued to cast additional examples of this variety.





This "dime" features a creature called "POP", which is short for populist. "POP" has the head of a Democratic donkey mounted on the body of a goose. The disdain for Bryan and his supporters is well documented by the slogan, "United Snakes of America" and "In Bryan we trust." The reverse sums up the disgust of the Republican opposition, "Free Silver / One Dam / 1896."



This piece, which was issued during the 1900 presidential campaign, is a sequel to the previous medalet. Like its predecessor, it is made of die struck aluminum. In 1900 Bryan's leading issues were free silver and opposition to American imperialism and the Spanish-American War. Since the war had already been fought and won, Bryan made little headway with that issue. The obverse features an old woman riding a donkey with an umbrella in her hand in place of a lance. A banner, which reads "anti-expansion," flies at the end of the umbrella. "POP" makes a cameo appearance, running in step with the donkey beside the phrase, "Anti Everything." The reverse addresses the free silver issue as the Republicans had in 1896.



A Sampling of Comparative Bryan Money

Schornstein lists 23 varieties of comparative Bryan money, but nine of those medalets are hand engraved pieces or die struck varieties that were modified after their initial distribution. All of these hand made or modified varieties are extremely rare and generally unobtainable. Among the collectable varieties, three manufacturers are most often seen: Gorham Mfg. Co. Silversmiths (most common), Spaulding & Co. Goldsmiths & Silversmiths (scarce) and Tiffany & Co. (very scarce to rare).



Nearly all of the 1896 comparative Bryan dollars present their case in terms of what the size of a "free silver" dollar should be. This die struck piece, which was manufactured by Gorham, states that a government dollar contains 412 1/2 grains of .900 fine silver. In order to equal the value of a gold dollar on September 16, 1896, a silver dollar would have to be equal in weight to this piece, which weighs 823 grains.

The reverse features an image of a cartwheel that is the diameter of a standard silver dollar. The phrase on the cartwheel again states the weight and fineness of a standard silver dollar. This same obverse is also found with a blank reverse.

The engraved "L. Staudenbaur" and the art deco style design that appears below it were engraved into the piece AFTER it was issued. It is not known if "L. Staudenbaur" was a former owner, a business advertisement or a Republican coattail candidate.

It must be noted that all of these silver pieces are tarnished and have their original surfaces. Among numismatists this level of originality is very important. Cleaning or any other removal of surface tarnishing can result in significant reductions in value.



This piece attributed to Spaulding & Co. presents the same message as the previous medalet although the configuration of the wording is different. The style of lettering on Spaulding varieties bears a strong resemblance to the Gorham pieces. For that reason it is possible that the same artist produced the dies for both companies.



The Tiffany dollars present their message in fewer words, a different weight and an earlier date. It states that 776 1/3 grains of silver were equal to one gold dollar in July 1896. The reverse is blank. The hallmark, "Tiffany & Co.," appears on the edge in tiny letters. The length of this hallmark is important. Tiffany restruck these pieces with the same die in 1908 for a New York coin dealer. The 1896 hallmark is 7 1/2 mm while it is 8 mm on the 1908 version. The 1896 pieces are much scarcer.

Tiffany also issued a variety with a circle on the reverse that has the same diameter as the Morgan dollar. Within the circle is a reiteration of the weight and fineness (412 1/2 grains, 900/1000 fine) of a "government dollar." That variety is rare.



This comparative Bryan dollar variety is from the 1900 campaign. It is the same size as a Morgan silver dollar. The wording states that this piece was worth 48 cents on July 5, 1900. The reverse poses the question as to what the value of a dollar would be if the 16 to 1 standard were adopted. Schornstein rates this variety as "common," but your author has not seen these pieces offered in large numbers at coin or political items shows.



This rare comparative Bryan dollar from the 1900 campaign was similar to the 1896 pieces. It has a diameter of 52 and 1/2 mm and sets the value of one gold dollar on July 4, 1900 at 870 grains of coin silver. The reverse features a cartwheel which illustrates the diameter of a U.S. Government silver dollar and a detailed description of the true value of the standard silver dollar. The legend reads, "412 1/2 grains silver 900/1000 fine is equal to 47 cents 4 mills in gold value. 870 grains silver 900/1000 fine is equal to 100 cents in gold value." Schornstein lists this piece as variety number 10, and the estimated population of this rare item is 11 to 20 examples known.

Who was right in 1896?

Modern economists would argue that neither the McKinley Republicans nor the Bryan Democrats had it completely right in 1896. There was a strong case for increasing the money supply. The country was just emerging from an economic depression, the Panic of 1893, and the gold standard was placing unnecessary limits on the ability of the Federal Government to increase the money supply by issuing more greenbacks. Both of these factors called for alternative monetary solutions. Unfortunately Bryan's free silver platform put no limits on the amount of silver coinage or silver backed currency that could have been issued. Therefore, just as Bryan's opponents claimed, massive inflation would logically have been the result.

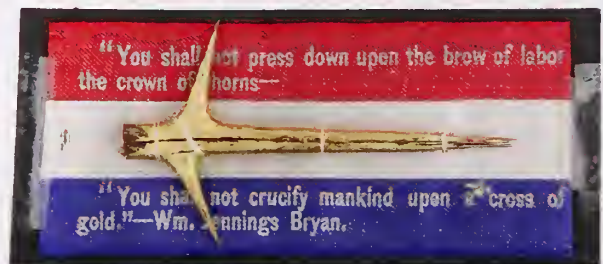
The Republican commitment to the gold standard artificially held the money supply at an inadequate level. Today open market operations by the Federal Reserve System can expand or contract the money supply as needed. Unfortunately no United States central bank existed in 1896. Following the 1896 election, gold discoveries in South Africa and Alaska added to the U.S. gold reserves. That allowed the Federal Government to expand the money supply. That expansion, combined with a natural swing in the business cycle, ended the depression. William Jennings Bryan tried to run on the issue of free silver again in 1900, but the issue was quickly becoming passé and was well on its way to fading into history.



1896 Silver dollar – Source of many Bryan money designs



1896 double eagle or \$20 gold piece – the flagship gold coin of the period





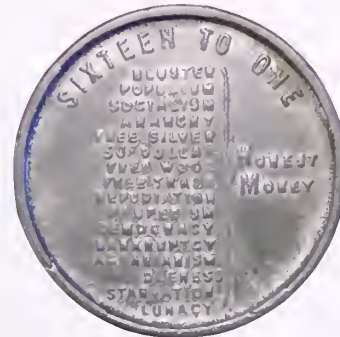
*"Bullion Value"
Satirical Bryan Dollar*



This piece, which Schornstein lists as variety 852, is an example of a well executed satirical Bryan dollar. It is made of lead, weighs 74 grams and has a diameter of 64 mm. The term "bullion value" makes a satirical comment that a silver dollar needs to be this size to be worth a dollar. The reverse legend questions the contention that 16 parts of silver are equal in value to one part of gold stating, "Sixteen to one, we don't think." Schornstein lists this piece as "common."



*Bryan Dime
with a list of
consequences if
the 16 to 1 policy
were to be
adopted*



This satirical "dime" in lead features a litany of woes that would befall the nation if the sixteen to one monetary standard were to become law. The list includes "bluster, populism, socialism, anarchy, free silver, 50 cent dollar, free wool, free trade, repudiation, pauperism, democracy, bankruptcy, agrarianism, idleness, starvation, lunacy." Schornstein lists it as variety number 343. It is 46 mm in diameter and weighs 45 grams.



*William McKinley congressional
election campaign stud when he
supported bimetallism.*

William McKinley may have wanted to forget this period in his political career when he was running for Congress and supported bimetallism. While in Congress, McKinley pleased the western mining interests by voting for both the Bland-Allison Act in 1878 and the Sherman Silver Purchase in 1890. Along with the term "bimetallism" this stud is half toned in gold and silver. It is 21 mm in diameter.



This Bryan Dollar features the unflattering Bryan caricature seen on a celluloid button (page 18) and in print.

This large satirical piece (81 mm) is made of cast aluminum and weighs 40 grams, which is light compared to other items of this size. It depicts the caricature of Bryan, and the slogan, "In God we trust for the other 47 cents," which also appeared a classic celluloid button. Schornstein lists it as 902. Other pieces with the same design are known in zinc, lead and low grade silver.



Comparison in size of a Bryan satirical dollar with a silver dollar





This piece, which is made of struck aluminum, is holed for suspension. It could have easily been worn as a shirt or lapel piece because it weighs only 2 grams. It contains elements of Morgan silver dollar design and makes the same point that a Bryan dollar is worth 53 cents and that we would have to trust God for the other 47 cents. The date on the obverse, March 4, 1897, would have been Bryan's presidential inauguration day, and the "NIT", which appears to right of the date stands for "Not In Trust." Schornstein lists this rare piece as variety 736 and it is 30 mm across.



This rare aluminum piece features "POP", the goose and donkey hybrid, "POP" is encircled by a wreath of snakes, and the pejorative, legend, "United Snakes of America," which refers to Bryan and his supporters. The reverse reads, "Billy Bryan's Free Silver," and the modified curse, "One Dam." Schornstein lists this piece as number 356. It is 44 mm in diameter and weighs just 8 grams.

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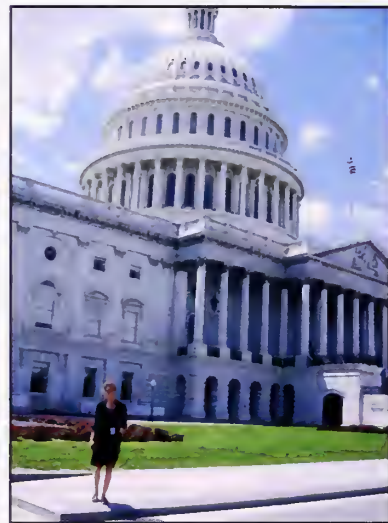
Political Campaign Evolution and the Demise of the Political Button

By Laura Romeyn

It was my third day as an intern in the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History that I remember most vividly. This was the day when Dr. Larry Bird, the curator I would be working with, first allowed me to familiarize myself with the vast collections present within the storage room of the Division of Politics and Reform. Months ago, when I was still finishing my freshman year at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, I was thrilled to be chosen for the APIC Smithsonian/Mark Jacobs Internship. I knew I would have access to the Smithsonian's hundreds of thousands of political items, so I began to contemplate those aspects of the presidential campaigns that most interested me. What I didn't know was just

how vast the collections would be and how generous Dr. Bird would be in giving me the freedom to explore. I was able to use as much time as I needed to study these campaign buttons myself and come to my own conclusions about presidential trends; observations that no newspaper or library book would be able to convey to me.

My research journey began by sorting through each year's presidential political memorabilia. One of my first observations was that political buttons technically began with George Washington, although they weren't used for campaigning purposes. Instead, the George Washington metal, shanked button that states "Long Live the President" is a brass-clothing button that was simply worn by his supporters to commemorate his inauguration. The next evolution in political buttons came with lapel medallions. These medals consisted of a metal token with a hole punched near the top so that a ribbon could be attached and worn on a jacket lapel. However, even the lapel medallions weren't used for



long, as novelty items became popular around 1840 and were deemed even more effective than a lapel pin in rousing public political support. I learned that the standard political buttons that we are familiar with today were not widely used for campaigning until the 1896 presidential campaign between William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan. I found numerous variations in buttons for this election, with differing button size and color, not apparent in previous elections. This election also solidified the button manufacturers Whitehead & Hoag Co. as the primary button provider for presidential elections. Not only did they produce buttons themselves, they also received a button patent that would be the prototype for many political buttons to come. The button type patented by Whitehead & Hoag was known as a celluloid button, and was made by placing a piece of celluloid covering over paper and then wrapping it around a metal disk. At the time, a celluloid button could be inexpensively made and mass-produced for public distribution.





Grover and Frances Cleveland



Edith Willkie



Throughout my perusal of the button collections I noted some other interesting trends in political campaigning. In today's elections it's commonplace for the "first family" to be in the spotlight, but I noticed that it wasn't until Grover Cleveland's election that the spouse or the whole family was involved. I came across a pin for this election that simply stated "Mrs. Cleveland" above a picture of Frances Cleveland with a pleasant expression on her face. After this election it became much more commonplace for a candidate to include pictures of his family. In fact, President Carter's campaign produced numerous buttons of his family. However, spouses were sometimes targeted in a negative way; take for example the 1940 Franklin Roosevelt election against Wendell Willkie where the Willkie campaign produced buttons that stated, "We don't want Eleanor either."

Another interesting aspect of modern day campaigns is the image created by a candidate for himself or given to a candidate by journalists or others. Many of

Theodore Roosevelt's campaign buttons from his 1898, 1900 and 1904 elections depict him in his "Rough Rider" uniform, a reminder of his service at San Juan Hill in the popular Spanish American War of 1898. In Theodore Roosevelt's re-election campaign in 1904, a 'teddy bear' was also used as a reminder of Roosevelt's good sportsmanship, referencing his humane treatment of a wounded bear during a Mississippi hunting expedition in 1902. Cartoonist Clifford Berryman depicted TR with a cuddly bear cub which, though historically inaccurate, evoked a new image of Roosevelt as fair and just. This association with the 'teddy bear' was incorporated into many novelty items of this election, including a series of six books by Seymour Eaton about the Roosevelt Bears. Titles from the series included "The Roosevelt Bears Go to New York" and "The Roosevelt Bears Take an Auto Ride." Several other items emphasized TR's wide toothy grin. Many years later, numerous buttons produced by the Carter campaign featured a caricature of Carter with an enormous toothy grin, a distinguishing characteristic of his already being emphasized by cartoonists, stating "the grin will win."

TR as a
Rough
Rider.

Throughout my campaign button exploration I made some general observations. For example, in the Hoover/Smith election of 1928, special interest buttons gained popularity, especially for women's groups. Al Smith's Catholic religion was becoming an important issue for some of the voters at this time, and one of Hoover's campaign buttons proclaimed that he would be, "A Christian in the White House." Wendell Willkie's 1940 campaign against Franklin Roosevelt produced more different negative campaign items than any previous campaign. Some of the buttons directed against the wealthy Franklin Roosevelt included "Dr. Jekyll of Hyde Park," "No Royal Family," "My friends but not my subjects" and "No Crown for Franklin." As I continued studying buttons, I became fascinated by George McGovern's 1972 presidential campaign. His campaign materials were obviously targeted toward a youthful audience, and were very telling of the "hippie" attitude of the 1970's. Pastel buttons with rainbows, trees, rivers, doves, and peace signs made up much of McGovern's button collection, as well as small colorful buttons with the word "McG;" an abbreviation of his name to no doubt make him seem young and hip. Novelty goods played a major part in McGovern's bid for president as well, with the advent of goods that complemented his button message. For example, McGovern's earth-friendly image was enhanced by "Don't Litter, Elect George McGovern President" litter bags for a more environmentally conscious America.

It was fascinating studying the evolution of campaign buttons in our country's past presidential elections, but the sad truth is that in our more recent elections campaign buttons haven't been utilized as much as they used to be. Dr. Bird told me that during Eisenhower's campaign, campaign cars would drive by throwing free "I Like Ike" pins out the window to anyone who would catch them. Nowadays, it's nearly impossible to step into a campaign headquarters for a campaign button without having to pay for it. Of course, some political buttons still make an appearance each election season, but disposable bumper stickers are less expensive to produce and are more often used at rallies. It appears that cost-effectiveness has become more important than the emotional connection a candidate can make with the wearer of his button.



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Pondering the campaign buttons of a more modern era, I began to wonder whether changing technology has played a role in the decline of the political button as a real campaign tool. Just as it's been said that President Kennedy ushered in the television presidency, I think it's safe to say that President Obama was responsible for the first all-encompassing Internet campaign. The Internet is extremely cost-effective, even more so than a disposable bumper sticker or campaign button, if a candidate knows how to use it to his advantage. The Obama campaign utilized the Internet to raise relatively small amounts of money from hundreds upon thousands of individual supporters. By email, the campaign was also able to deliver photos and messages that could be printed out by voters at their personal computer at no cost to the campaign. Although Obama utilized networking sites such as Facebook to strengthen his connection with supporters and let them know him on a personal level, the campaign also produced all manner of Obama gear. I contacted Mr. Cary Jung, the founder of the Obama Political Items Collectors chapter of APIC to hear his perspective on the "embarrassment of riches" he states that the Obama campaign produced.

Apparently, the campaign did produce numerous items for campaign distribution, hundreds of designs, yet did not produce many buttons connected to an official campaign event, like a rally with a date and location, as had been done in the past. As the utilization of political buttons in campaigning continues to decline, it's a good thing that Jung was, "very impressed with the amount and quality of the paper items" in the Obama campaign,

because if buttons won't continue to tell the story of a campaign, a new medium must take its place.

My experience working with the political items collection in the Division of Politics and Reform was an exceptional experience for me. I feel incredibly lucky to have had full access to thousands of rare items of political and historical importance, most of which will never be put on public display in the museum. By working my way through each election, I was not only able to understand how campaigning has evolved, but I found myself noticing the declining role of political buttons in our modern elections. I think it's quite probable that major elections will now be wholly dominated by electronic media communications and that it won't be long before the campaign button may be seen even less. As would be expected, there is still a place in elections for inexpensive items, but as I mentioned earlier, stickers will still be more prevalent than buttons because of their low production costs. Politicians who want to win must now harness the grassroots capabilities of the Internet, no matter how sad a story this is for political buttons. As a teenager who was able to observe the historical change in communication within the Obama-McCain election, I now feel even more strongly of the need to preserve this facet of American history. With politicians resorting to new technology, it has become even more important to preserve our nation's disappearing political treasures; artifacts of American history which convey a message no website could ever state as simply and effectively.



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Collecting History

Bits and Pieces

By Robert Fratkan

Part of the fun of collecting history is finding the stories behind the items. Here are a few recent acquisitions and brief details about these buttons.

WIR National Hunger March



The Workers International Relief (WIR) was an offshoot of the Comintern-controlled Internationale Arbeiter-Hilfe, founded at Lenin's instigation in Berlin in 1921. Its initial function was to provide famine relief for the Soviet Union in the early 1920s. After the famine crisis abated in the Soviet Union, the WIR—with branches established in most countries of the world—became an international support force for strikers and their families. In the U.S., it provided food, clothing and shelter during the Communist-led textile and cotton workers' strikes at Passaic, New Bedford, and Gastonia in 1926-29, and the miners' strikes of 1931-32.

The Workers Film and Photo League, which worked closely with the WIR, was also an offshoot of the IA-H.

At the height of the Great Depression, the WIR organized two national hunger marches. The first WIR National Hunger March came to Washington, D.C. on December 7, 1931. In D.C., retired Brigadier General Pelham G. Glassford had become Police Chief only the month before. The March was ostensibly led by Herbert Benjamin and the Unemployed Council, a non-partisan organization, but was actually Communist sponsored. Most participants were Communists, and the March drew little public interest. There were about 1600 marchers, a small number compared to the 1932 Bonus March less than a year later.

There were no spectacular incidents because Chief Glassford gave them no provocation, while providing the marchers a camping area outside the central city. He treated the March as a legal demonstration, knowing that any brutal repression would play into the hands of the organizers. Glassford let them have their say, counting on the marchers to eventually disperse and go home, which they did in just a few days. There was a second March which fizzled more quickly in December, 1932.

While there is no way to tell, this button is considered to be from the 1932 March.

Glassford had the same policy with the 1932 Bonus Marchers, and his efforts held problems with the bonus army to a minimum until the last day, nearly two weeks after the marchers had been ordered to leave town. In the end, the Hoover administration, at the behest of the District Commissioners, ordered General MacArthur to remove the marchers from Anacostia Flats on July 28, 1932.

Knights of Liberty



The Knights of Liberty was an organization founded in California in 1918 whose activities sought to punish "disloyalty" as they defined it. The New York Times in May, 1918 referred to them as a "New Organization in California To Stamp Out Disloyalty." According to a Knights spokesman, "The KOL has 82 members in San Jose, and branches in San Francisco, Oakland Stockton, Santa Rosa, Palo Alto and other places. We are going to stamp out disloyalty. We give a fair and impartial trial, and, if the evidence warrants, we turn the man over to the civil or military authorities." However, this was not always the case.

On May 3, 1918, the Times carried stories about three men who were the subject of KOL actions. An Oakland tailor was hanged until unconscious, then tied to a tree, and later driven away by the KOL. His eventual fate was not given. A second man, who was accused of pro-German activities, was abducted by men wearing black coats over their heads who drove him 5 miles into the country, where they applied a coat of tar and feathers and then brought him back to the city and chained him to a brass cannon, where he was found by police. He was held overnight in a local jail for his own protection.

A third man, in Richmond, CA, was taken from his home by fifty white-robed men who took him to the municipal wharf, where he was "tried" for "disloyalty" and was tarred and feathered. He was "found" not to have bought a Liberty Bond. He promised he would buy a \$100 worth of Liberty bonds and would join the Red Cross, before his captors released him. He had come from Germany 10 years before. Recently, a sizable number of these small Knights of Liberty buttons have shown up in the hobby.

Unemployed League



During the Great Depression, a large number of local and regional unemployed workers organizations were formed. There isn't much mention of the Unemployed League, except that they became part of the Workers Alliance of America in 1936, the first nationwide organization for the unemployed. The Alliance was formed by a merger of the Unemployed Council (see WIR above), the Unemployed League and other independent groups representing Americans out of work. The Alliance's protest activities supported increased appropriations for the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and other federal work-creating programs.

Victory Hall Association



The Victory Hall Association was founded in 1919 to raise money to build a combined war memorial and convention center in New York City to be called Victory Hall. The hall would have brass plaques with the names of the war dead, a vault for their military records, an auditorium, exhibit halls, meeting rooms and sports facilities. The site for the hall would be a city block in a prime location on Park Avenue, which the organization president, George Wingate, wanted the city to donate to the Association. This instigated a hot debate in city government, with the strongest opposition coming from Fiorello LaGuardia, Acting President of the Board of Alderman. LaGuardia denounced the plan as a real estate speculation scheme. He refused to let the city give away what may have been the most valuable vacant piece of property in NYC, if not the world. The city eventually sold the property and the Victory Hall was never built.

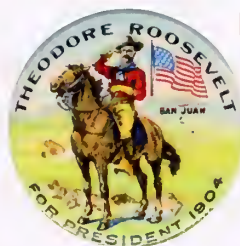
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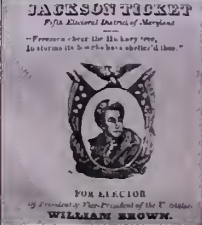
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Uncle Sam's White Elephant Its Game - Its Finish

By Steve Baxley

Where did the term "white elephant" originate? As the story goes, it had something to do with the great showman, P.T. Barnum. Barnum, always looking for a new source of entertainment to bring in the crowds, was earnestly seeking a new attraction when his prize attraction, Jumbo the Elephant, was killed by a train.

Barnum needed a replacement and not just any replacement would do. Barnum decided that an albino elephant would do the trick and bring the masses back with their money. Barnum found a "white" elephant, but the problem was that most people who had paid good money to see the animal thought its color was closer to yellow than to white. Thus, the term "white elephant" represents something with a value exaggerated beyond its true worth.

In 1904, Alton B. Parker, the Democratic Presidential candidate, used this symbol to graphically portray the Grand Old Pirate's protectionist policies as shackled to the good of the trusts and not the country. The backpaper of this button reminds the wearer that the "White" Elephant G.O.P. Recaptitulation was a healthy \$41 million deficit. The G.O.P. claimed their policies were prosperous for the country, but the truth was that the Republican Party had suckered the voter; protectionism had helped the trusts and put the people in debt. But that game was over. Parker and Davis, having exposed the "white elephant," would score a safety and prevent the Republicans from even getting into the field of play, much less achieving their goal, the Presidency. This is truly one of the greatest thematic campaign buttons in history.



Button shown enlarged.

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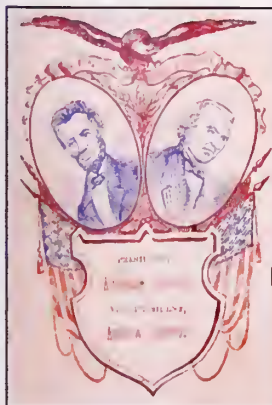
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Connecticut 1956: A Republican Year

By Michael Kelly

Here's an interesting item sent in by Gary W. Potter (APIC #8173). The paper handout is from Connecticut during the 1956 election. The item features President Dwight Eisenhower along with his Connecticut running mates, including U.S. Senator Prescott Bush (father of President George H.W. Bush and grandfather of President George W. Bush). The others on the card are Congressman-at-large Antoni N. Sadlak and Congressman Edwin May, Jr.

That year turned out to be a good one for Connecticut Republicans. Eisenhower, Bush, Sadlak and May were all successful.

Banker Prescott Bush had been the unsuccessful Republican candidate for the United States Senate in 1950 but won a Senate seat in 1952. Senator Bush was reelected in 1956 but was not a candidate for reelection in 1962.

Antoni N. Sadlak was elected to Congress in 1946 and served in that office until losing his seat in 1958.

Edwin May held his congressional seat for a single term, losing re-election in 1958. He did serve as Republican State Chairman from 1958 to 1962 but lost his bid for the GOP gubernatorial nomination in 1962 and his bid for the GOP nomination for U.S. Senate in 1968.



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